

REMARKS

This amendment is in response to the Final Office Action dated August 6, 2003. In the Final Office Action, claim 11 is rejected under 35 USC 112 first paragraph. Claims 9-15 are rejected under 35 USC 102(e) in light of Simon (US 5354308).

35 USC 112

Claim 11 is rejected under 35 USC 112 first paragraph. The Final Office Action does not consider the variation in longitudinal flexibility to be supported by the application as filed. The longer struts shown in Figure 4 provide the recited variations in longitudinal flexibility.

35 USC 102(e)

Claims 9-15 are rejected under 35 USC 102(e) in light of Simon (US 5354308). Claim 9 has been amended to recite that for each annular element, each peak portion is connected to one valley portion by a straight strut and connected to another valley portion by another straight strut and that each valley portion is connected to one peak portion by a straight strut and connected to another peak portion by another straight strut. All of the straight struts in an annular element are of the same length and the peak portions are of the same length as the valley portions within an annular element.

The end-most 'annular zigzags' of Simon, as identified in the Final Office Action do not meet this claim recitation nor does Simon suggest this recitation of the claim. To the extent that the finger portions constitute valleys, they are not the same length as the peaks. To the extent that the seemingly longitudinal portion of the finger portion along with the angled portion of the 'zigzag' are considered as constituting a strut, the strut is not straight but rather, has a bend in it.

The Office Action notes that the drawings (Figures 1, 3 and 4) submitted on May 28, 2003 were approved and entered by the Examiner and requests that formal copies of these drawings be submitted. Formal copies of Figures 1, 3 and 4 are submitted herewith.

List of applications claiming priority from the same parent application

The following is a list of US applications which claim priority from the same

parent application. The claims of the listed applications are included with this Amendment.
Please note that the attorney docket numbers of these applications have been changed:

US Application No.	Former Attorney Docket No.	Current Attorney Docket No.
08/511,076	S63.2-5605	S63.2-5605-US01
09/122,431 Issue as U.S. 6348065	S63.2-7076	S63.2-5605-US02
09/599,674	S63.2-9216	S63.2-5605-US03
09/666,866	S63.2-9397	S63.2-5605-US04
10/194,854	S63.2-10223	S63.2-5605-US06
09/197,278	S63.2-6769	S63.2-6769-US01
09/878,596	S63.2-9969	S63.2-6769-US02

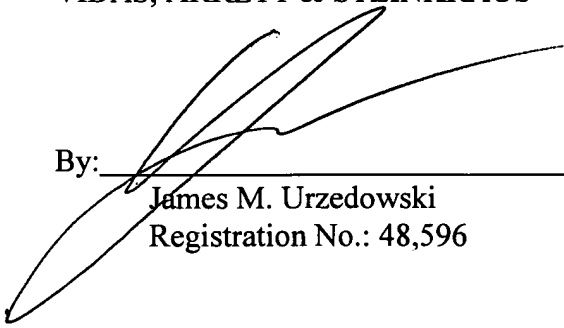
Conclusion

Withdrawal of the rejections is requested. The application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Notification to that effect is also requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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